

# BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK STUDENT HANDBOOK

*The Hornets Buzz*  
2020-2024



*Alabama State University*  
*A Proud Tradition... The Promise of a Bright Future*

**Alabama State University**  
**College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences**  
**Bachelor of Social Work Program (BSW)**

**STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**2020 - 2024**

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Student Handbook is intended to serve as an adjunct to the Policies and Procedures for the Bachelor of Social Work Program. This document is available to all BSW students.

If after reading this Handbook, further clarification regarding the policies and procedures is desired, consult a Faculty Advisor, the BSW Program Director or the Social Work Department Director. The BSW Department may be reached at (334) 604-9035.

## **II. THE BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM**

### **Historical Overview of Social Work Education at Alabama State University**

The State Department of Education in Alabama approved the development of a social work program at Alabama State University in the late 1960s. By 1971, seven courses were offered, and sociology majors were able to select social work as a concentration. When social work was offered for the first time as a major in 1974, four students were enrolled. By 1979, 164 students were majoring in social work. As of Fall 2020, 142 students have declared social work as their major.

During the 1982-83 academic year, the social work program began the process of applying for accreditation from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). In 1985, social work was organized as an autonomous program within the Department of History and Social Sciences. A program director with a CSWE accredited master's degree and doctoral experience was appointed to provide leadership for the program. Curriculum changes, initiated in 1984, reflected the Council on Social Work Education Standards and Procedures in effect at that time. The program was granted initial accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education in 1989 and was reaffirmed in 1992. The Social Work Department gained full status as a separate academic department in the fall of 1994 and was reaffirmed in 2000, 2008 and 2018.

Upon successful completion of the prescribed curriculum students receive a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree and are prepared for entry into beginning social work practices in a variety of employment settings with families, groups, organizations, and communities. Currently, ASU's Social Work Program is the only accredited Social Work Program in the Montgomery area.

### **Program Mission, Goals and Objectives**

#### **Program Mission**

The Department of Social Work's mission is to prepare students to practice entry-level social work in a competent and effective manner. Students will be able to apply critical thinking skills to their

understanding of and commitment to alleviating social problems nationally and internationally particularly those that are unique to Alabama's poor and oppressed communities.

## **Program Goals**

The program's overarching goal is to prepare competent and effective beginning level professional practitioners who are knowledgeable and will serve as leaders in the areas of service delivery to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Alabama State University's Social Work Department seeks to prepare students capable of the following:

### **The Goals of the Bachelor of Social Work Program.**

1. The program will produce competent beginning level social work practitioners who identify as a professional social worker, who understand and can apply critical thinking skills to enhance human well-being, alleviate poverty and oppression and promote social and economic justice through advocacy at all levels of practice;
2. The program will prepare students to use an ecological systems perspective and a problem-solving approach in their practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities;
3. The program will prepare students to practice in a variety of geographical areas, with an understanding of the social and cultural diversity that exists nationally and internationally;
4. The program will prepare students to practice in a manner consistent with the values and ethics of the profession and demonstrate self-awareness of personal values in order to maintain the primacy of professional values in guiding practice;
5. The program will use available opportunities, resources, supervision and consultation to continue students' professional development through career-long learning;
6. The program will prepare students for policy practice and enable them to help develop and implement policies that advance social well-being;
7. The program will prepare students to demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities and colleagues;
8. The program will prepare students to engage diverse client groups, assess client needs using a person-in-environment perspective, utilize existing interventions, or create new interventions tailored to meet specific client needs, and to conduct ongoing evaluation of their own practice; and
9. The program will prepare students to engage in research-informed practice and to use evidence-based practice to generate new research to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery.

## Program Objectives

1. The Program's objectives describe how the Social Work Department achieves its goal of preparing students for entry into beginning social work practice. These objectives are listed below:
2. To encourage an understanding of the person-in-environment perspective of social work by providing the comprehensive liberal arts foundation that includes knowledge of the humanities and the social, behavioral, and biological sciences (Goals 3,6).
3. To make available knowledge of the origin and development of the social work profession and learning experiences throughout the curriculum that facilitate the understanding of social work purposes, values, and ethics for use in professional social work practice (Goals 3,6).
4. To give theoretical and practice content on the patterns, dynamics and consequences of discrimination, economic deprivation and oppression, and intervention strategies that promote social and economic justice (Goals 2,6).
5. To support an understanding of the influences of biological, psychological, social, and cultural systems on human behavior as a means of enhancing the problem-solving and developmental capacities of diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities (Goals 1,2, 3,4, 6).
6. To bestow knowledge of people as individuals, members of families, groups, organizations, communities, and social systems within which they interact as a means of understanding persons and environments and their interdependence (Goals 1,2, 4).
7. To explore and analyze the historical and philosophical development of social welfare and its relationship to the social, political, economic, and cultural context in which it has existed for the acquisition and development of skill in social welfare policy and program analysis, formulation, and advocacy (Goals 3,6).
8. To encourage an understanding and appreciation of methods of scientific inquiry for use in problem-solving and evaluating practice activities with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities (Goal 6).
9. To make available knowledge of the general method of social work practice and the proficiency to use it as a problem-solving framework in social work practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities and to facilitate an understanding of the relationship of research content to social work practice (Goals 1, 2, 4).
10. To offer field instruction in social service agencies and settings as a means of ensuring professional social work socialization, including internalization of professional values and application of theory and methods for developing skills in working with agency clientele, structures, and systems (Goals 1, 2, 4, 5, 6).

11. To make available throughout the curriculum content about differences and similarities in the experiences, needs, and beliefs of people; to include groups distinguished by race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, age, and national origin (Goals 2,4).
12. To offer educational experiences which promote effective communication, both oral and written, on subjects of professional concern and in professional roles.
13. To give an educational experience that promotes critical thinking, professional socialization and encourages continual growth and development and participation leadership roles (Goals 5,7).



### **III. UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

The University has several policies which govern how the institution will handle various student concerns. These policies include but are not limited to; sexual harassment, nondiscrimination, disability regulations and special support services. These policies and others can be found in the University's student handbook, "The Pilot" and the Undergraduate Catalog. The University policies which govern grading can also be found in "The Pilot".

#### **University Accommodation and Inclusion**

Alabama State University values diversity and inclusion. We are committed to a climate of mutual respect and civility among members of our community. ASU recognizes that disability is an aspect of diversity. Our goal is to create learning environments that are accessible, equitable, inclusive and welcoming. If there are aspects of instruction or design of a course, activity or event related to your disability that result in barriers to your inclusion or to an accurate assessment or achievement, then please notify the Office

of Disability Services as soon as possible. Students who have a documented disability should present this information to formally request reasonable accommodations. If accommodations are needed, it is highly recommended to seek them at the beginning of each semester to assist with academic achievement; however, accommodations may be requested at any time. Students should contact and present documentation, in-person at the office located in the John G. Hardy Student Center. Students can also email: [disabilityservices@alasu.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@alasu.edu), or call (334) 229-5127, (334) 229-5134 or TDD (334) 229-8822 / 800-548-2546), for further information about academic adjustments or accommodations.

### **Attendance Policy**

Each student is expected to attend all lectures, seminars, laboratories and field work for each registered class, including the first-class session, in order to verify registration with instructors and to complete all work assigned for the course. Failure to observe this policy may seriously jeopardize a student's academic standing.

If a student does not attend class during the first week (first five instructional days) of the semester and does not give prior notification to the instructor of reasons for absence and intent to attend the class, the student will be dropped from the course.

A student is permitted one (1) unexcused absence for each credit hour generated by the class. For example, three (3) absences are allowed in a three-hour class. The student's final grade will be lowered for unexcused absences above the allowed 3 unexcused absences. For example, a student with a grade of —A who has 4-6 unexcused absences will receive a final semester grade of —B, 7-9 absences a —C, etc. Excessive absenteeism, whether excused or unexcused, may result in a student's course grade being reduced or in assignment of a grade of F.

At the beginning of the class, the instructor is responsible for having listed on his or her syllabus the University Attendance Policy. The student will be held responsible for adhering to the University Attendance Policy. Instructors of courses are not obligated to provide makeup opportunities for students who are absent, unless the absences have been officially approved.

An officially approved absence, however, merely gives the individual who missed the class an opportunity to make up the work and in no way excuses him or her from the work required. Official excuses are granted by the Office of Student Affairs for authorized university activities, verified personal illness or illness or death in the immediate family.

Absences will count from the first day of registration for each course. Students receiving veteran's benefits are required to attend classes according to the regulations of the Veterans Administration in addition to those regulations set by the university for all students. It is the responsibility of the instructor to keep an accurate attendance record of all students enrolled. Students should understand that absences may jeopardize their grades. It is the responsibility of the student to withdraw from the university or drop a course.

Veterans and student service members with special circumstances or who are activated are encouraged to notify the instructor as soon as possible and are encouraged to provide Activation Orders.

## **IV. ADMISSIONS**

Admission to Alabama State University **does not** constitute admission to the Bachelor of Social Work Program. Social Work admission requirements and guidelines include the following:

1. Completion of General Education Requirements
2. Cumulative Grade Point Average of 2.0
3. Completion of Social Work application and all attachments
4. Completion of a Biographical and Personal Statement (Completed in SWK 220)
5. Interview with the Social Work Admissions Committee

### **Admission Process**

The admission process to the Social Work Program begins during the semester that the student enrolls in SWK 220 Introduction to Social Work course unless a student transfers from a two-year college or other university. Students are provided with the details of the admission criteria and procedures in the *Bachelor of Social Work Student Handbook* when they are interviewed for admission to the Social Work Program.

To apply for admission, the student must have completed the following:

- Satisfactorily completed 24 credit hours in the core curriculum, including one (1) credit hour of orientation (ORI 100), and six (6) credit hours of English (ENG 131, ENG 132); and
- Earned a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or better.

Students must submit their applications on-line and should apply to the BSW program immediately following midterm in the SWK 220 course. To apply for admission to the Social Work BSW Program, the student must complete the "Application for Admission to the Social Work Department" (Appendix F, Vol. II) which includes an essay and a self-assessment survey. The application can be obtained from the SWK 220 instructor and/or the BSW Secretary. After the application is received, the BSW Secretary will schedule the potential candidate's virtual or face-to-face interview.

The admission criteria apply to incoming students, transfer students, and current Alabama State University students wishing to pursue the major in social work. A student cannot be admitted into the Bachelor of Social Work Program until they have completed the admission procedures described above.

The student must complete the application packet in its entirety. The student will write, and submit with their application, a personal essay addressing the questions about their interests in becoming a social worker as indicated on the application form.



Committee members review the student's application and supporting documents (academic transcripts) and discuss with the student his or her interests and suitability for the profession. As stated earlier, the Social Work Department adheres to the ADA policy relative to admission of students to the Department.

The purposes of Alabama State University Social Work Department admissions procedures are enumerated as follows:

- To assist students in assessing their suitability for professional social work practice in relation to social work core values, ethnic and purposes.
- To acquaint students in making sound plans for self-improvement as a part of their commitment to professional development; and
- To assess students' academic readiness for professional foundation courses.

The committee meets with the applicants to provide them with information about the history of the department, the profession, curriculum criteria, field education expectations, and social work organizations. Faculty members review submitted applications and supporting documents and conduct individual and group interviews with applicants. Students are then informed of their designated advisor.

Following the review of the student's application, completion of the interview with the Admissions Committee and completing SWK 220 Introduction to Social Work with a grade of "C" or better, the Admissions Committee will make their recommendation concerning the student's status for admission to the Director of the BSW Program.

The BSW Program Director will notify students in writing of their admission status. Acceptance status includes "Admission", "Conditional Admission" or "Admission Denied"

Students who are admitted conditionally are notified in their acceptance letter of the contingent conditions associated with their admission. The letter notes the issues that need to be addressed or corrected before full admission is granted. These include the completion of:

- 24 credit hours in the core curriculum, including one credit (1) credit hour of Orientation (ORI 100), and six (6) credit hours of English (ENG 131, ENG 132); and
- Earned a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or better
- The completed Application for Admission to the Social Work Department
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Students who have been denied admission to the program have the right to appeal the decision of the committee using the grievances procedures found in this handbook.

## **V. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

### **Academic Advisement**

All BSW students are assigned a department faculty adviser who serves as their principal contact person. Students are assigned academic advisors based on the first letter of their last name. Each faculty member is responsible for advising an assigned group of students correlating to the alphabet (i.e., A-E: Instructor Shaw, F-K: Prof. Pressley, etc.).

Students are required to meet with their department advisor each academic semester. This policy requires scheduled meetings and encourages informal contacts between students and advisors throughout the students' period of study in the department.

It is the responsibility of the student to meet with his/her advisor to ensure that the proper courses are selected and that requirements of the program are properly met. Students who desire to change from their assigned advisor may make a written request to the BSW Program Director and a decision will be rendered on a case-by-case basis.

The following are the goals of the Advisement Program:

- To facilitate the development of students into professional social workers by providing specified individual and group time for discussion of social work as a professional activity and of the preparation necessary for professional practice, including specified knowledge, skills, values, and ethics;
- To provide continuous opportunities for assessment of personal suitability for professional social work practice;
- Ensure that students take the proper courses in the proper sequence
- Monitor the academic progress of students, update students' curriculum records each semester, and periodically review program policies with students.

During the initial meeting, the student will receive a program of study and approval to take classes for the first period of enrollment. Students who apply for admission late - less than three weeks prior to the beginning of a semester - may be delayed in registering for classes resulting in the payment of late fees. Students should consult with the assigned advisor each semester to ensure that the proper classes have been selected and to keep abreast of current BSW Program and university policies and procedures.

### **Professional Advisement**

Professional Advising is provided by social work program faculty, staff, or both in conjunction with and throughout the academic advising process. Professional advice includes discussions and advice related to field placement selection with regards to future areas of interest for practice, career options, job opportunities in the field of Social Work, and pursuing graduate degrees.

Professional dress and behavior, career counseling and preparation for job interviews are also included in professional advice.

Students are encouraged by faculty to attend the university's career center to acquire job readiness skills, resume writing skills and other pertinent skills. Professional advice is primarily provided by the faculty but supplemented by the campus career center. (See Attachment).

### **Course Requirements**

Social Work students are required to complete an interdisciplinary arrangement of courses which make up the liberal arts foundation as a basis for entering the social work curriculum. Many of these courses constitute the General Education Requirements of the University.

Courses required for all University students include six hours in English Composition, which introduce the basic principles of writing, emphasizing clear and coherent expression of thought, mastery of fundamental composition skills as well as procedures and skills for writing research papers. Voice and Diction and Logical Reasoning provide activities that allow students to develop skills and proficiency in thinking, analyzing, speaking, and listening. The computer and statistic courses establish competencies in research skills and facilitate students' evaluation of their own practice.

The liberal arts courses and curriculum sequence for students required for BSW students are shown below. Liberal arts courses selected by the department to prepare students for courses in the professional foundation include: General Biology (two courses), Computer Applications in the Social Sciences, Cultural Anthropology, Elementary Statistics, General Psychology, Intermediate Composition, Introduction to Economics, Logical Reasoning, Social Problems, and Voice and Diction.

Content in biology courses provides students with knowledge of the internal biological factors that are important determinants of behavior. The ecological focus of the required biology courses is designed to facilitate students' understanding of the social conditions needed to realize biologically determined potentials. For example, the content learned will allow students to assess illnesses and health conditions commonly associated with poverty that could underline a client potential.

The Humanities and Fine Arts provide knowledge and experiences that are essential for a well-rounded student. Courses in these areas of Music Appreciation (MUS 121), Theater (THE 111) and Art Appreciation (ART 131) provide cultural values and reveal the many ways through which human beings seek spiritual identity, individual expression, and personal freedom. Additionally, Humanities through the African American Experience (HUM 103) begins the Department's content on cultural diversity. For example, the class provides for an integrated study of the humanities thorough exploration of the African American culture.

Courses in history, the social sciences and the behavioral sciences facilitate the person-in-environment perspective that are connected to the key organizing elements of the department, augmenting content in HBSE, social work practice, and social welfare policy and services courses. Students gain an initial understanding of the psychological determinants of behavior that influence problem-solving, coping, and developmental capacities in the General Psychology course (PSY 251). Furthermore, they are introduced to the uses of defense in managing person-environment interactions to meet basic needs and balance the demands of the environment and personal desires. In World Geography (GEO 206), students examine the

earth, its people, and cultures. State and Local Government (POS 218) facilitates students' understanding of the political factors that impact the lives of people.

Content in the Social Problems course (SOC 213) provides information that aids students' understanding of human motivations and social behavior in relation to social structures, systems, and social perspectives. The anthropology course (ANT 328) examines culture through an ecological perspective that views humans as creative beings engaged in adapting to a multifaceted environment.

**Liberal Arts Requirements for Social Work Department\* (77 Credit Hours)**

<u>Courses</u>	<u>Credit Hours</u>
<b>Orientation</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>English Composition</b>	<b>6</b>
English Composition I	
English Composition II	

All University students are required to complete six hours in English Composition, which introduce them to basic principles of writing, emphasizing clear and coherent expression of thought, mastery of fundamental composition skills as well as procedures and skills for writing research papers, including critical thinking skills.

<b>Humanities and Fine Arts</b>	<b>12</b>
Humanities through the African American Experience	
Introduction to Literature (2 courses)	
Arts Appreciation	
Music Appreciation	
Introduction to Theatre	

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<b>Natural Science and Mathematics</b>	<b>11</b>
General Biology (2 courses with a lab)	
Finite Mathematics (Math course for non-science majors)	
<b>History, Social, and Behavioral Science</b>	<b>12</b>
World Geography	
World History (2 courses)	
*Introduction to Economics	
Introduction to Sociology	
<b>Pre-Professional, Major, and Elective Courses</b>	<b>18-21</b>
Cultural Anthropology or Societies around the World	
*Introduction to Economics (if not taken under previous section)	
Technical/Professional Writing or Intermediate Composition	
State and Local Government	
Social Problems	
Statistics	
Voice and Diction	
<b>Required Support Courses</b>	<b>9</b>
Logic and Reasoning	
Computer Applications in Social Sciences	
General Psychology	
<b>Free Electives</b>	<b>5-8</b>

(These courses may be chosen from any of the University's offerings)

\*Students are allowed the opportunity to take ECO 254, Introduction to Economics and apply it to **either** History, Social, and Behavioral Sciences **or** Pre-Professional, Major, and Elective Courses.

### Major Requirements

The mission, goal, and objectives of Alabama State University's Social Work Department are implemented through a prescribed curriculum plan that includes a strong liberal arts component, professional social work foundation courses, and social work electives. Social systems and ecological systems models provide the unifying theoretical basis for the total curriculum and a solid foundation to guide problem-solving activities. Generalist Practice is based on the conception of the social worker as a service provider who is equipped with broad-based problem-solving skills (Generalist framework) for providing services to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, and for having knowledge of the systems that constitute various work environments, and a commitment to social work values and ethics.

The required social work professional foundation is a series of eleven three-semester hour courses including two elective social work courses, two four-hour field instruction courses (requiring approximately 432 clock hours of supervised field instruction in a social agency), and two one-hour field instruction seminar courses. The professional foundation reflects the program objectives and includes content on social work values and ethics, diversity, social and economic justice, populations-at-risk, human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice, research, and field practicum. The courses in the required professional foundation are as follows:

### **Required Courses**

SWK 220	Introduction to Social Work
SWK 221	Social Work Communication
SWK 322	Human Behavior and the Social Environment I
SWK 323	Human Behavior and the Social Environment II
SWK 356	Social Welfare Policy and Services I
SWK 357	Social Welfare Policy and Services II
SWK 450	Applied Research
SWK 463	Field Instruction I
SWK 464	The General Method of Social Work Practice I
SWK 465	Field Instruction II
SWK 466	The General Method of Social Work Practice II
SWK 467	Field Instruction Seminar I
SWK 468	Field Instruction Seminar II

### **Elective Courses**

SWK 230	Social Work in Health Settings
SWK 354	Child Welfare
SWK 370	Social Work with the Aged
SWK 455	Social Work Practice with Families

## **VI. Student Advisory Board**

The Student Advisory Board is composed of two students from each academic level. Through the advisory board and student organizations, students can participate in the formulation and revision of department policies and procedures and to provide feedback to faculty and the administration. For example, students from the department can also serve on the Dean's Student Council for the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, which the Department of Social Work is a part.

Department of Social Work faculty encourages students to participate in formulating and/or modifying policies that impact students as social work majors. Participation in this process can be accomplished by providing verbal or written suggestions, or feedback through the National Association of Black Social Workers, the Whitney Young Social Work Club, and Phi Alpha Honor Society.

Formal feedback and participation in the formulation and modification of policies impacting academic success and student affairs is provided through a Student Advisory Board. This board is comprised of a required 7 members with distribution of the positions as follows:

- 2 Members (Sophomore Standing),
- 2 Members (Junior Standing)
- 3 Members (Senior Standing).

As a contingency plan, members of the Executive Boards of the Social Work student organizations (the National Association of Black Social Workers, the Whitney Young Social Work Club and Phi Alpha Honor Society) will serve in any vacant positions on the board. If any member of the board is unable to serve in this alternate position, the next person in the chain of command will fulfill this responsibility.

These students serve as liaisons between the students and the BSW Social Work Program faculty and staff. Members of the Student Advisory Board have the opportunity to advocate on behalf of student interests while upholding a responsibility to participate in the continuous quality improvement of the program through the formation, review and revision of academic policies and student affairs.

This board meets no less than twice per semester, with mandatory meetings at the beginning and end of each academic term followed by meetings with the program faculty with an open invitation to meet with the program's Advisory Board. The Student Advisory Board will collect feedback regarding the program from students at the end of each semester.

The Student Advisory Board will coordinate an annual College/Job Fair for students and a Fall Semester Meet and Greet between faculty and students. Thus, each student's input can be given to multiple Department representatives to support the student's openness, feelings of confidence and comfort in so doing. Individuals with designated roles to cultivate this feedback include faculty advisors, the department director person, or other faculty. Students can also request to meet with the department faculty during a department faculty meeting.

## **VII. Student Advisory Board Bylaws**

### **Article I – Mission and Purpose**

#### **Section 1. Mission**

Alabama State University's **Student Advisory Board** is composed of elected representatives from each classification of students within the BSW Program.

The mission of these elected representatives is to strive to build an ongoing relationship with the Bachelor of Social Work faculty and Program Administration so that they make both ensure not only the rights of students in the academic environment but also the six values of the social work profession.

This is achieved through facilitating communication between the student body, Faculty and Administration through advocacy, active engagement, and support. This board meets no less than twice per semester, with mandatory meetings at the beginning and end of each academic term.

## **Section 2. Purpose**

The Board's purpose is to allow students to effectively communicate the expectations, needs, concerns, and suggestions of the Program's student body to the Program's faculty and administration. This council will serve as a connection between the staff and students and an avenue for communication between career and academic professionals and the social work students they educate and prepare.

## **Article II – Membership**

### **Section 1. Composition**

The members of the Student Advisory Board

The members of the board will be composed of a required seven members, with distribution of the positions as follows:

2 members (Sophomore standing)

2 members (Junior standing)

3 members (Senior standing)

As a contingency plan, members of the executive boards of social work student organizations (Whitney Young Social Work Club, Phi Alpha Honor Society, and National Association of Black Social Workers chapters) will serve in any vacant positions on the board. If Any member of an executive board is unable to fulfill this alternate position, then the next member of the chain of command will fulfill this responsibility.

The board will collect feedback from students regarding the Program at the end of the semester. This feedback will be presented at the next mandatory meeting at the beginning of the following semester by advisory board members and will subsequently be presented to faculty members.

### **Section 2. Elections**

#### **1. Recruitment**

- a. Students in each program level (Sophomore, Junior, Senior) will vote for the board members. Each cohort will obtain nominations and vote to elect its representatives. This shall be done to have members for each new academic year's advisory board by the beginning of October. The current advisory board and BSW faculty will hold an



information session prior to nominations, so that interested students will have a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the board.

- b. All efforts should be made to elect representatives from all cohorts to ensure continuity within the advisory board.
2. Election Process
    - a. **Students** elect the advisory board representatives out of their cohort or academic level (Sophomore, Junior, Senior).
  3. Special Elections

If a board member resigns after being elected, the runner-up will serve in that member's place. If the runner up is unable to serve, a new nomination and election shall be held as early as reasonable. The departing member is responsible for communicating their resignation to the full Student Advisory Board and requesting a replacement.

### **Section 3. Member Expectations and Responsibilities**

#### 1. Term Lengths

Members will be elected to terms of 2 academic years, with the exceptions of graduating seniors, whose terms will be 1 year.

#### 2. Attendance and Voting

If a member of the Student Advisory Board misses 2 meetings, that individual is eligible for removal from the board. The member will be given the opportunity to explain any extenuating circumstances before a decision is made. To replace that member, a special election will be held at the earliest convenience. Attendance is necessary because there is a quorum requirement for all votes and lack of attendance is likely to lead to not having a quorum in a voting situation.

#### 3. Representation and Communication

- a. Receiving and responding – members are responsible for reporting student feedback to the board and any appropriate administrators. Members may request that student concerns/issues be added to the next meeting agenda.
- b. Seeking student input – members will be expected to reach out to students to solicit feedback at the request of the board or the faculty. Members are also expected to attend formal and informal student feedback meetings such as cohort or program gatherings. Board members are required to provide additional opportunities for direct student feedback such as lunch-time meetings, classroom announcements or a suggestion box.
- c. The Student Advisory Board is responsible for sharing meeting minutes and other important information to all students and other stake holders through classroom announcements, emails, and other strategies identified by the group.

#### 4. Other Committee Membership

- a. Board members are expected to serve on other advisory board standing committees and task forces for specific issues or events as needed.

## **Article III – Decision Making**

### **Section 1. Items Requiring Voting**

1. Approval of meeting minutes and agendas
2. By-law revisions. By-laws, including mission statement, shall be reviewed and voted upon at least every three years.
3. Official group declarations or recommendations to outside bodies
4. Any member of the Student Advisory Board may call for an item of discussion to be made into an action item for voting.

### **Section 2. Quorum**

In order for voting to take place, a minimum of 60% of the board members must be in attendance.

### **Section 3. Voting Process**

1. Board decisions will be made by consensus when at all possible.
2. If consensus is not achieved after considerable discussion of a proposal, the board will allow each member to share her or his perspective. The guidelines for the sharing are as follows:

Only one person may speak at a time. That person may talk until finished, always remembering to be respectful of time. Upon completing their turn,

- a. the member passes the opportunity to speak to the next person wanting to speak.
  - b. No interruptions when the recognized member is speaking.
  - c. Everyone will have an opportunity to speak but may choose to pass.
  - d. If there is agreement, then the decision is made, if there is a quorum at the meeting.
3. After the opportunity has been provided for all members to speak, and a consensus is still not achieved, the council will use the democratic voting system and the proposal needs to receive a simple majority.
  4. If there is not a quorum of voting members at a meeting, no decision may be made either by consensus or voting at that time. In this case voting may be postponed until the next meeting.
  5. Any Student Advisory Board member may request that a consensus discussion or vote be postponed to have time to receive feedback from his/her constituents. In this case, the vote would be pushed to the next meeting unless it was time sensitive. In that case, the option of an email vote will be considered.

## **Article IV – Meetings**

### **Section 1. Schedule**

1. The first full Advisory meeting of the year may be set by the BSW Program Director. All subsequent meetings will be decided upon by active members. All members are encouraged to attend meetings.
2. All regular meetings will be scheduled at the beginning of the academic year and near the end of each academic semester to the extent possible.
3. The individual responsible to facilitate any regularly scheduled or special meetings shall announce the meeting schedule at least one week in advance. Announcement should include the current agenda and most recently approved meeting minutes.

### **Section 2. Cohort Specific Outreach**

Board members are to reach out to the students in their cohorts at least twice per academic semester in person, through email or social media. The board should be sure students know who they are, share what the advisory board is doing, and gather feedback from the students in their cohort.

### **Section 3. Meeting Leadership**

1. All meetings will be facilitated by two board members and facilitation rotates amongst the members. The facilitators are responsible for setting and distributing the agenda at least one week before the meeting to the board members and the student body. The facilitator is also responsible for leading the meeting and making sure that tasks are assigned for specific activities.
2. Volunteers for each meeting will be a rotation of members from each cohort (Sophomores, Juniors, Seniors). Facilitator and note-taker roles for next meeting will be determined at the end of each meeting.

### **Section 4. Documentation**

1. Note-takers will email or otherwise distribute meeting minutes to all board members and faculty advisors within one week of meeting date for review.
2. Note-takers will incorporate any approved corrections agreed upon and redistribute asking for a vote of approval.
3. Once approval vote reaches quorum, Board members may distribute them to their cohorts.

### **Section 5. Standing Agenda Items**

1. Reports

Brief reports to share the most important information for board members to know about current committee activities; items requiring action or extended discussion should be addressed in other section of the agenda; brief questions or points of clarification welcomed. Includes reports on subcommittees, affiliate committees, ad-hoc committees, and cohorts.

## 2. Updates and Announcements

Brief informal updates and announcements on old business items or other matters important to members that will not already be included in business items, discussion items, or reports; brief questions or points of clarification welcomed.

## 3. Comments, Concerns, and Acknowledgments

Presentation of discussion items requested prior to meeting or called for from other agenda items; items brought for discussion should have a clear purpose; presentations from guests or students welcomed by request; time limits should be defined for each item to ensure all items receive attention.

# Article V – Advisors

## Section 1: Primary Advisors

1. The BSW Program Director will serve as the primary advisor. They shall be ex officio members with no voting privileges
2. The Student Advisory Board may request consultation from other faculty and staff as deemed necessary.

## Section 2: Duties and Responsibilities

1. The administrators/ advisors shall assist with logistical coordination of meetings and retreats, providing necessary materials and administrative support for adequate conduction of meetings, and any other needs set by the current board members.
2. Student Advisory Board members understand that advisors will share information as openly as possible and within the confines of required confidentiality.

## Statement of Student Rights

In accordance with CSWE standards, the Department of Social Work acknowledges the following statement of Student Rights:

## Statement of Student Rights

Students have the right to expect the following:

- a. Department faculty to provide them high quality instruction and training for generalist social work practice that is consistent with the cognitive and affective of learning Department objective on council on Social Work Education Standards;
- b. Fair evaluation of performance based on written criteria that are consistent with course objectives;

- c. An advisement procedure that not only facilitates their development into professional social workers but also assures that the proper courses are taken in proper sequence;
- d. A written syllabus presented at the beginning of each course specifying the purpose of the course, prerequisites, objectives, course requirements, grading criteria, and expected outcomes;
- e. Representative participation in the development and evaluation of Program policies from sophomore, junior, and senior students;
- f. Mechanisms that facilitate and encourage participation in their own academic and professional organizations; and,
- g. Policies and procedures that allow the expression of grievances.

Student input has been critical for the ongoing evaluation of policies related to the academic program and student affairs. Some of the opportunities afforded to students for input in policies affecting academic and student affairs are:

- Advisement sessions with faculty advisor (meets each semester and as needed);
- Students' opinions that emerge out of Whitney Young Social Work Club, NABSW, and Phi Alpha Honor Society meetings (meets monthly);
- Formal evaluation of course content and teaching by students;
- Field instruction seminar (meets weekly); and
- Student membership on the Social Work Advisory Board (meets twice per semester).

### **Statement of Student Responsibilities**

Students have the responsibility of demonstrating their commitment to preparation for generalist social work practice in the following ways:

- a. Exhibiting behaviors that are consistent with social work values and ethics and that demonstrate respect and sensitivity to rights and dignity of all individuals;
- b. Demonstrating scholarly interest in assigned classroom readings and activities;
- c. Participating in student and professional social work association and activities, particularly Alabama State University social work student organizations;
- d. Scheduling conferences with Department of Social Work faculty advisors prior to registration for assistance with course scheduling to assure adherence to the Department's policies;
- e. Participating on committees related to the development and implementation of Department program policies and activities (with other students and faculty); and,
- f. Utilizing writing, reading, math, and speech laboratories to improve communication skills (on professional subjects and in the professional context)

## **SOCIAL WORK ATTRITION POLICY**

The academic status of students who are formally admitted to the major will be evaluated minimally twice during the academic year by the assigned advisor. The advisors will submit students to the Social Work Admissions Committee for the review and recommend termination when the record of the student shows the following:

- a. When student's overall grade point average falls below 2.0
- b. When a minimal grade of "C" has not been earned in each social work course during the semester
- c. When student has provided rationale for previous failing grade and has a plan for renewal that seemed sufficient to allow continuance in the major, but still has earned a grade of less than a C in a second social work foundation course.

The procedures for dismissal are as follows:

- student's deficiencies will be reviewed by all members of the Social Work Admissions Committee;
- the Committee will meet with the student to discuss academic deficiencies, allowing student to respond; and
- when evidence substantiates that the student is lacking in the necessary qualifications for meeting the academic and/or ethical requirements of the profession, he or she will be counseled out of the program and assisted in finding a more suitable field of study.

## **SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM NON-ACADEMIC FAILURE**

### **POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

#### **Social Work Program Non-academic Failure Policy and Procedures**

Alabama State University Social Work Program's faculty has an obligation to the social work profession to ensure, in as much as possible, that its BSW graduates are academically, emotionally, and ethically prepared for professional practice. Because of this obligation, students who exhibit signs of mental or emotional stress, engage in behavior which violates the National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics, and/or engage in other behaviors (problematic alcohol and substance use, or criminal behavior) will be evaluated to determine if they should continue in the Program, and if so, those requirements that would ensure that they are prepared for professional practice.

Alleged problems may be presented by faculty, staff, field instructors, or other students. Information relevant to the evaluation of the problem should be as thorough as possible and include the sources of the information.

Identified problems with accompanying documentation should be presented in writing to the Program Director. The Program Director will notify the student and his/her advisor in writing that a potential

problem(s) has been identified and convene a meeting with the student and his/her advisor to discuss and evaluate the allegations.

During this meeting, the parties involved will attempt to resolve the difficulties. If the resolution of the problem(s) requires remediation and/or correction, a written remediation/correction plan will be prepared and signed by the student (if the student agrees to the charge and plan), the advisor, and the Program Director. The written statement of the alleged problem (s) and the remediation plan would be placed in a confidential file established for this purpose. The remediation plan must be explicit with clearly stated behavioral criteria for evaluating its success or failure. Compliance with the remediation plan and completion of the behavioral criteria will be monitored by the Program Director.

When the resolution recommends a period of withdrawal from the Program, a written plan will be prepared which sets forth the considerations for reinstatement, including the minimal period of time which must elapse before the student can apply for reinstatement and the documented behavioral changes expected. The written plan must be signed by the student, the advisor, and Program Director and placed in a confidential file. The same procedures will apply if the resolution is a temporary withdrawal of the student from the program.

When the student disagrees that a problem exists or disagrees with the proposed resolution, the student may, within fourteen (14) calendar days, request that the Director convene a panel of judges to consider the issues and recommend a resolution. The panel shall consist of three faculty members, the Program Director, and a faculty member other than the student's advisor, and another faculty member selected by the student. The panel may make one of the following recommendations: (1) the student should continue in the program; (2) the student will continue and agree to work on remediation/corrections for the specified problem; or (3) the student will be required to withdraw, indefinitely or temporarily for the reasons specified.

The Panels' decision will be presented to the entire Program faculty within seven (7) calendar days for a decision on the recommendation. If the student is dissatisfied with the decision of the panel/and Program, the student may initiate the procedure described on page 13 of the University's handbook of *Students Rights and Responsibilities*.

Consistent with the values of the Social Work profession, all parties will maintain strict confidentiality in the process. If information is needed from sources outside of the Social Work Program or University, written consent will be obtained from the student to secure a release for such information.

## **STUDENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The University and the Social Work Department are always obligated to provide a curriculum that prepares students for beginning a professional level of social work practice in accordance with the Council on Social Work Education Standard (CSWE) for Baccalaureate programs. Students must commit themselves to preparation for professional social work practice. In accordance with these standards, the program acknowledges the following statement of Student Rights:

## **Statement of Student Rights**

Students have the right to expect the following:

department faculty to provide them high quality instruction and training for generalist social work practice that is consistent with the cognitive and effective of learning Department objective on the council on Social Work Education Standards;

1. fair evaluation of performance based on written criteria that are consistent with course objectives;
2. an advisement procedure that not only facilitates their development into professional social workers but also assures that the proper courses are taken in proper sequence;
3. a written syllabus presented at the beginning of each course specifying the purpose of the course, prerequisites, objectives, course requirements, grading criteria, and expected outcomes;
4. representative participation in the development and evaluation of Program policies;
5. mechanisms that facilitate and encourage participation in their own organization; and
6. policies and procedures that allow the expression of grievances.

Student input has been critical for the ongoing evaluation of policies related to the academic program and student affairs. Students' input in policies affecting academic and student affairs is obtained through the following avenues:

- Advisement sessions with faculty advisor;
- Students' opinions that emerge out of Whitney Young Social Work Club, NABSW, and Phi Alpha Honor Society meetings;
- CJ Student formal evaluations of courses and teaching;
- Field instruction seminar; and
- Student membership on the Social Work Advisory Council.

Two social work majors, who are club officers, are selected each year to serve on the Social Work Advisory Council. Membership on this committee provides social work majors with additional avenues for participating in shaping the policies of the department.

## **Statement of Student Responsibilities**

Students have the responsibility of demonstrating their commitment to preparation for professional social work practice in the following ways:

1. Exhibiting behaviors that are consistent with social work values and ethics and that demonstrate respect and sensitivity to rights and dignity of all individuals;
2. Demonstrating scholarly interest in assigned classroom readings and activities;
3. Participating in student and professional social work association and activities, particularly Alabama State University Social Work Student organizations;



4. Scheduling conferences with Social Work Department faculty advisors prior to registration for assistance with course scheduling to assure adherence to the Department's policies. The students being advised in the University College Advisement center are also required to adhere to the Department's policy of seeking co-advisement at registration from Department faculty. A temporary folder is maintained in the Department's office until the permanent file is received from University College;
5. Participating on committees related to the development and implementation of Department program policies and activities (with other students and faculty); and,
6. Utilizing writing, reading, math, and speech laboratories to improve communication skills (on professional subjects and in the professional context).

## **VIII. STUDENT GRIEVANCES PROCEDURES**

The Student Grievance Procedure is designed to be used by a student(s) following a specific complaint as a result of actions or policy decisions by the faculty or for a school related conflict with another student. The intent of this procedure is to assure students' fair and just consideration and to provide guidelines, which follow, for the resolution of student grievances.

1. The student must first attempt to resolve the matter with the faculty person or student.
2. If the matter is not resolved within 14 days from the date of the grievance meeting, the student should submit a written statement to the Director describing the nature of the grievance. The written statement to the Department Director person constitutes the opening of the procedure.

The Department Director shall respond in this manner:

1. acknowledge in writing receipt of written grievance statement from the student and forward a copy of the written grievance statement to the faculty person; and
2. informs both parties of the findings and conclusion in writing; the Director person decides to bring the parties to a meeting to interpret the findings and conclusion.
3. If both parties sign the statement of findings and conclusions, then the problem is resolved.
4. If either party does not sign the statement of findings and conclusions then the matter is not resolved, and the following procedure is automatically put into motion.
5. If the Department Director is directly involved in the decision or policy of concerns, then the senior faculty member shall perform the following role:
  - a. A Director from another department will forward the three written statements to the Student-Faculty Grievance Committee for adjudication. This committee shall include the following persons:
    - i. a student member appointed by the president of one of the social work organizations;
    - ii. the student's faculty advisor; and
    - iii. a faculty member chosen by the Department Director.

**Note: None of the above shall be selected if they have been directly involved in the decision leading to the grievance.**

6. Each Student-Faculty Grievance Committee shall be an Ad Hoc Committee, serving only in the instance of the particular grievance for which it has been established. The committee should function as follows:
  - a. At the first meeting the committee shall select a Director Person.
  - b. Records on the hearing shall be kept either in writing or by use of a tape recorder.
  - c. The committee shall follow whatever procedures it considers appropriate to ensure thorough study, fair consideration, and equitable resolution of a particular grievance.
  - d. When the grievance has been resolved, the Director person of the Ad Hoc Committee shall inform the Department Director person in a written statement, signed by both parties.
  - e. If the student is not satisfied with the resolution or decision of the committee, then the student may initiate the procedure described on page 12 of Students Responsibilities.

Consistent with the values of the Social Work profession, all parties in the grievance process must adhere to strict confidentiality.

#### **VIV. STUDENT ORGANIZATION**

The Social Work program faculty encourages students to join and actively participate in the Whitney M. Young Social Work Club, National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW), and Phi Alpha Social Work National Honor Society.



Notices of meetings are posted in classrooms and on bulletin boards and are announced in classes. Faculty members view participation in the club as an integral part of the total Department curriculum.

Membership is open to all students in the Department, with only minimal annual dues. Under the leadership of elected student officers and a faculty advisor, the clubs engage in a variety of activities, which provide excellent opportunities for student's socialization, professional enrichment, and community service. A major annual event is the Honors Banquet, where students invite speakers from the practice community. This program also includes the presentation of awards to students who have excelled in academics, community service, and service to the organization.

Students are also encouraged and expected to join the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), Alabama Conference of Social Workers (ACSW), the student chapter of Council of Social Work Education (CSWE), and the student chapter of Alabama/Mississippi Social Work Education Conference. Brochures and membership information are available in the Social Work Resource Center or from social work faculty members.

## **THE CONCURRENT STRUCTURE**

The Social Work Practice courses at Alabama State University are Social Work Communication and the General Method of Social Work Practice I & II. Social Work Communication and General Method I are taught prior to Field Placement. General Method II is taught concurrently with Field Placement I. Field Placement is a two-sequence course. Twenty-four (24) clock hours per week are required in the Field Placement Agency. These hours are completed on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Students receive four (4) semester hour credits for Field Placement I and four (4) semester hours for Field Placement II, and one hour each for Field Placement Seminar I and II.

The Field Instructor will be aware of the Field Placement course objectives and will provide the students within the agency opportunity to integrate the theoretical learning from the classroom with work in the agency.

## **X. STUDENT REVIEW POLICY & PROCEDURES**

The purpose of Student Review is to identify students who are experiencing challenges that impair their ability to successfully complete the degree program and to assist them in either resolving the problematic issues or exiting the degree program. It is the aim of the student review policy and procedures to identify vulnerable students early in their matriculation in order to provide support and guidance in a time frame that maximizes opportunities for successful completion of the degree program or avoids unnecessary expense of funds and time pursuing a degree they are unlikely to obtain given the circumstances. A student review is enacted when initial efforts by faculty or the Office of Field Education to address the situation are unsuccessful in bringing resolution in a timely manner, and the problem escalates.

### **Procedures**

1. Students are referred to Student Review by faculty (adjuncts and full time), administrators or Field staff. A form will be completed by the referring party indicating the student's name, ID number, and a description of the problem of concern. The completed Form is forward to the respective Department Director.
2. The following are situations that warrant referral to Student Review:
  - a. Egregious unprofessional or unethical conduct (including plagiarism) or behavior that is otherwise unbecoming of a social worker;
  - b. Academic failure or non-performance in class or field placement; or
  - c. A situation, condition or problem of a personal nature that appears to be impairing a student's ability to attend class or submit required assignments in a timely manner or

otherwise satisfy the requirements of the degree program. This includes health and mental health issues (acute or chronic), employment or family related issues, etc.; or

- d. A student who has been dismissed from the degree program as a result of one of the aforementioned issues and wishes to be readmitted to complete the program; or
  - e. Any situation determined necessary for referral by faculty, administrators and/or field education staff.
3. Upon receipt of completed SRC Form, an ad hoc Student Review Committee is convened by the respective Department Director in collaboration with the Associate Dean for a hearing with the student to discuss the situation and, if warranted, propose a course of action to address the situation. A written contract detailing the steps to be taken by the student and other relevant parties will be generated and signed by the student, the relevant parties and the department Director. If appropriate, the contract will identify specific behavior(s) that the student will stop or start to address the problem identified, a way to track the behavior(s), and a time frame for follow up to determine if the problem has been resolved, and if appropriate, consequences if the problem has not been resolved within the time frame.

## **XI. FIELD EDUCATION**

### **FIELD INSTRUCTION**



### **PURPOSE OF FIELD EDUCATION**

The field education component of the curriculum at Alabama State University is consistent with the mission, goals and objectives of the Social Work Department. It provides students with the opportunity to engage in supervised social work activities and practice experiences in the application of practice principles, values and ethics of the profession, and theory and skills acquired in professional foundation courses in CSWE approved settings.

The field education curriculum allows the social work student an opportunity to apply knowledge gained in the generalist professional foundation, to develop relationship and problem-solving skills, to internalize social work values and ethics, to utilize practice principles and sensitivity to diversity with varying sized systems, to assess his or her personal strengths and limitations, and options for change.

The goal is to produce analytical and knowledgeable social workers who, with supervision, practice competently and can apply a problem-solving approach to social work tasks.

The student who successfully completes these two semester courses is prepared as a generalist to intervene with individuals, families, and groups to improve their social functioning and prevent and ameliorate the problems found in neighborhoods and communities.

### **FIELD EDUCATION OBJECTIVES**

Field Education objectives are based on department objectives, which are implemented through a curriculum with a liberal arts component and Social Work Foundation courses. Students who successfully complete SWK 463, SWK 465, SWK 467 and SWK 468 should have the beginning ability to:

- work within a social agency, under supervision, in a responsible manner as a generalist social worker with practice skills for intervening in the range of client systems;
- understand the agency's structure, goals, objectives, policies, and procedures;
- demonstrate an understanding and acceptance of the standards for professional behavior;
- demonstrate through attitudes and behavior a clear commitment to the values and ethics of the profession as established in the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (see Appendix C);
- apply knowledge from the liberal arts and professional foundation courses to the various types and sizes of client systems;
- apply beginning skills in direct service to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and skills for advocacy and organizing on behalf of client systems;
- apply beginning skills in utilizing the ecological-systems and problem-solving approaches to the provision of direct services to individuals, families, groups, and organizations;
- develop and sustain professional relationships that are characterized by mutuality, collaboration and respect;
- assess persons/situations/environments, and identify strengths and problems of people and their environments;
- plan and contract with clients, carry out responses agreed upon with clients, and provide referrals, and engage in termination;
- utilize the agency's policies and procedures in accessing resources and services for the benefit of clients and work to modify policies when needed to address diverse populations;
- use the group as a medium for change and service;
- demonstrate sensitivity and commitment to the special needs of people of color, the poor, women, gays and lesbians, the physically and mentally disabled, the elderly and other populations at risk;
- use plan interventions aimed at the elimination of oppression and discrimination;

- write clear and concise case assignments, recordings, and other professional documents;
- use effective oral communication;
- practice with critical self-awareness, with respect for culture diversity and varying lifestyles;
- use self in a purposeful manner;
- use supervision and other available resources to support and enhance his or her professional development;
- critically evaluate the effectiveness of his or her professional practice activities; and
- use research methodology to critically evaluate the effectiveness of his or her practice activities and to enhance the self as a helping person.

### **FIELD EDUCATION ADMISSION POLICY**

The Social Work Department admits only those students who are candidates for the baccalaureate degree in social work to the Field Education courses and social work practice courses. Students must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 in all courses taken and must have satisfactorily completed all required core curriculum courses and major field curriculum courses work with a grade of "C" or better, prior to being admitted to field education. Exceptions to the above courses are SWK 450 Applied Research, SWK 466 Methods II which are taken concurrently with Field I and Field II, as well as any Social Work electives and Free Electives. These courses can be completed during this period. Students will **NOT** be granted permission to simultaneously enroll in required Core and Social Work classes while completing field Education. Refer to the Social Work Curriculum Guide for these required classes. Students who have met the above requirements must attend all of the scheduled preparatory Field Placement meetings in order to meet the requirement for beginning Field Placement. Only excused absences from Student Affairs will be accepted.

The field education screening and admission process begins the Spring semester, prior to the student entering Field, generally the second semester of the student's junior year. Field Orientation I is held for eligible students and those who plan to enroll in the Field Education courses in their senior year. The purpose of this first orientation is to acquaint students with the Field Education application process and the requirements for Field Education. Students are provided with information on professional business etiquette and attire and are required to participate in mock interviews to demonstrate appropriate and inappropriate verbal and non-verbal communication. Students complete and submit the Field Education Application to the Field Education Director with a current resume and a Child Abuse and Neglect (CAIN) Central Registry Clearance form.

Each application is assessed by the Field Education Director, who conducts individual interviews with the student and recommends him or her to a specific agency based on the expressed interest, previous volunteer or work-related experience, and academic record of the student and the requirements of the agency. The Field Education Director may also consult with other department faculty to assess further a student's strengths, needs, other unidentified areas of concern, and their overall commitment to the

social work profession. The Field Education Director will notify students who fail to meet eligibility requirements.

Eligible students are required to have an interview with the recommended Field Instructor prior to the beginning of the senior year. The intent of the interview is to provide the student and the Field Instructor an opportunity to meet, interview, and determine jointly the suitability of the placement. Field Instructors notify the Field Education Director of the decision regarding the recommended student, and the Field Education Director in turn notifies the student of the agency's decision. If the student is not selected by the interviewing agency, the Field Education Director meets with the individual student to discuss the interview results as relayed by the denying agency. The student is then referred to another agency that is of mutual agreement between him/her and the Field Education Director.

### **FIELD INSTRUCTION PLACEMENT PROCESS**

The following process is used in matching the student's interest with appropriate contracting Agencies:

- a. Field Instruction Placement Application is to be submitted to the Field Education Director by designated date, prior to the semester of the proposed field placement year. The completed application includes the student's draft resume', unofficial transcript and other documents.
- b. Students are to complete an Alabama Department of Human Resources Central Registry Child Abuse/Neglect clearance form. There is no charge. A criminal history background check may also require. The Field Education Director will be notified of any charges/convictions but not the specific details. The student will be asked to explain the circumstances and the resolution.
- c. Each student who meets the Field Placement Requirements will interview with the Field Education Team to determine the student's expressed interest, training, and experience, and possible placement options. Students will dress professionally for this interview as they would for the agency interview.
- d. The Field Team will contact an approved agency to determine its availability to provide a generalist practice field experience. They will provide the agency with any information necessary about the student to help insure a successful placement. This may include the student's readiness for practice, academic achievements, and volunteer or work experience. An appointment will then be scheduled by the student with the agency field instructor.
- e. The decision regarding the student's application to Field Instruction can be one of the following:

**Admit-** Student is admitted to Field Instruction. Evidence indicates the student meets and/or will meet the requirements.

**Defer Admission** - Student will be apprised of the conditions that must be satisfactorily completed before admission will be considered. Conditions are carefully outlined in writing and serve as the primary criteria for future admission consideration.

**Deny admission-** Student is not permitted to enter field placement. This option is used only in instances where circumstances have arisen that seriously conflict with the Social Work Code of Ethics. If for any reason the student is not deemed ready for placement, an application will not be processed for the placement semester, and the student will be notified by the Director of Field Education.

## **FIELD INSTRUCTION APPROACH AND STRUCTURE**

The structure of Field Education at Alabama State University promotes a planned relationship between cognitive and experiential learning. Student assignments during placement is designed according to the goal and objectives of the Alabama State University Social Work Department, the objectives of Field Education, and the student's abilities and interests. All assignments are educationally directed and professionally supervised to represent a planned linkage between classroom learning and agency experiences. The student maintains a daily log of the generalist activities engaged in at the agency. The Field Director/Field Liaison is informed about the student's weekly professional development through the log sheets.

The advantage of this design is that it promotes the utilization of theoretical material while it is being presented (Demoski, 2005).

## **FACTORS AFFECTING THE SUCCESS OF THIS APPROACH TO FIELD INSTRUCTION**

The Field Instructor has the following responsibilities:

1. The Field Instructor accepts the role of teacher and supervisor.
2. The Field Instructor is knowledgeable of the theoretical content in the social work course.
3. The Field Instructor provides experiences that link course content with field experiences.
4. The Field Instructor works with the Field Coordinator in planning the course (Field Instruction), including sequencing field content with in-class content (The General Method) to allow them integration.

## **THE CONCURRENT STRUCTURE**

The Social Work Practice courses at Alabama State University Are Social Work Communication and the General Method of Social Work Practice I & II. Social Work Communication and General Method I are taught prior to Field Placement. General Method II is taught concurrently with Field Placement I and Applied Research is taught concurrently with Field Placement II. Field Placement is a two-sequence course. Twenty-four (24) clock hours per week are required in the Field Placement Agency. These hours are completed on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Students receive four (4) semester hour credits for Field Placement I and four (4) semester hours for Field Placement II, and one hour each for Field Placement Seminar I and II.



The Field Instructor will be aware of the Field Placement course objectives and will provide the students within the agency opportunity to integrate the theoretical learning from the classroom with work in the agency.

## **FIELD INSTRUCTION AGENCIES**

*Examples of Alabama State University Field Instruction Agencies include the following:*

Alabama Department of Youth Services (DYS)

Group Home for Children

Alabama State Department of Rehabilitation Services

First Baptist Caring Center/Nehemiah Center

Montgomery Area Council on Aging

Catholic Social Services

Christian Services of Alabama

Alabama State Department of Human Resources

Aid to Inmate Mothers

Brentwood Children's Home

Central AL Aging Consortium

Diversicare Health Care

Job Corps

Seraaj Foster Family Homes

The Wellness Coalition

## **Termination of Placement**

1. Unsatisfactory ratings will result in termination of placement if a student fails to achieve the objectives of Field Education as listed on Evaluation Form and course outline.
2. Immediate termination from Field Education may also result if the student performs an action that is considered by Field Instructor or Field Team to be damaging to others, and it is deemed that his/her immediate removal from placement is necessary to protect the agency, community, the student or clients; or he/she shows a recurrent series of lesser problems that he/she seems unable to overcome.
3. Termination may also occur if the student does not adhere to Field Education Standards, including Social Work Code of Ethics.

4. Transition, not termination, of placement may occur if extenuating circumstances arise whereby a student is not able to meet learning goals as outlined in Field Education Standards.

### **Student Grievance-Recourse Procedure**

The following process is available to students and Field Instructors for resolution of Field related problems.

**Step 1.** A conference between student and Field Instructor.

**Step 2.** Conference between student and Field Team as well as conference between Field Instructor and Field Team.

**Step 3.** Triad conference between student, Field Instructor and Field Team. This is a joint approach to problem identification and exploration of alternatives, including any corrective action detailed in a professional development plan.

**Step 4.** If the student feels that the grievance still exists after following through on Step 3, he/she may present a complaint in writing to the Director of the Social Work Department and Program Director. The Department and Program Director shall consider the matter in consultation with the Field Education Director, and the student to seek a resolution.

**Step 5.** If the student feels that the grievance still exists after following through on Step 4, he/she may pursue the complaint, in writing, to the Dean of the College and on through the University grievance process.

Please see the BSW Field Education Manual for full details regarding field education requirements, standards and procedures.



**NOTES:**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for taking notes. It occupies most of the page's vertical space.